

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 27, 2018

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Chairman Ajit Pai
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Pai,

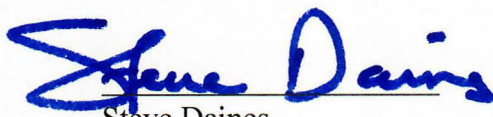
As Senators from rural states, we take seriously the need for affordable and reliable broadband in communities with limited access. While the Federal Communications Commission and this Congress have made progress in expanding connectivity in rural areas, there is more work to be done.

In recent years, TV White Space (TVWS) technology has emerged as an affordable solution for rural and tribal communities lacking broadband. Employing unused and unlicensed spectrum has the potential to expand opportunities for many rural and tribal communities, including expanding their access to the global marketplace and spurring job creation. This is possible due to the unique features of the spectrum, which is capable of traveling long distances while maintaining robust bandwidth capabilities. However, we are also aware of concerns of possible interference with traditional broadcast networks and Wireless Medical Telemetry Service. Therefore, we believe it is important the Commission finalize guidance for TVWS that allows for the expansion of this technology while mitigating the potential for harmful interference.

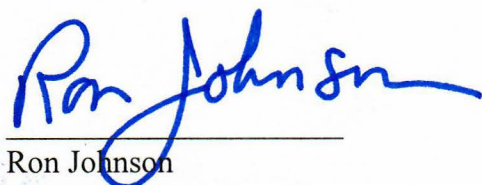
We urge the Commission to finalize its outstanding Unlicensed Reconsideration proceeding (Docket No. 14-165) and Database Accuracy proceeding (Docket No. 16-56), adopting appropriate technical rules to provide sufficient regulatory certainty so that broadband providers can invest in expanding connectivity in rural states. We support using different tools and technology to expand broadband access and believe it is important to balance the expansion of new technologies with existing networks and infrastructure.

We sincerely appreciate your efforts to bridge the digital divide and hope you will consider taking action to resolve the regulatory uncertainty for TVWS development.

Sincerely,



Steve Daines
United States Senator



Ron Johnson
United States Senator



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

December 28, 2018

The Honorable Steve Daines
United States Senate
320 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

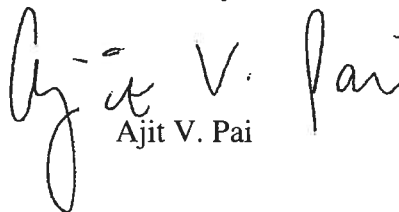
Dear Senator Daines:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of affordable and reliable broadband in communities with limited access. Having grown up in rural Kansas, I know what the digital divide is like. That's why closing that divide is my top priority—and one that the Commission is working on all fronts to support. And that's why this year we streamlined rules to deploy the next-generation of wireless connectivity, known as 5G, encouraged carriers to replace aging copper with super-fast fiber on an expedited basis, launched the first auction for millimeter-wave spectrum, increased federal support for our rural healthcare program and for small, rural carriers serving high-cost areas, and held our nation's first reverse auction for fixed broadband support. The results of these actions will be felt throughout America, and especially in rural America, where as you know the case to build out broadband is all the harder for any business to make.

I also agree with you that unlicensed spectrum in the TV white spaces—those channels on which no broadcaster is broadcasting—promises an opportunity for new wireless broadband deployments. That's why I have asked staff to continue working on the many details left unfinished by the prior Administration, including resolution of how to ensure database accuracy. This is no simple task—after all, TV white space devices must fully protect all incumbent services like broadcasting, private land-mobile radio, radio astronomy, and Wireless Medical Telemetry Service. But it is one the Commission's excellent staff is well-positioned to carry out.

Thank you for your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I may be of further assistance.

Sincerely,


Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

December 28, 2018

The Honorable Ron Johnson
United States Senate
328 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

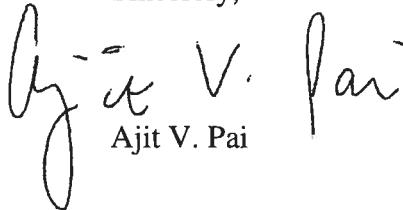
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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Ajit V. Pai". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ajit" being the most prominent part of the script.
Ajit V. Pai